



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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By: Sgt. Edward Eagerton

Seasoned commander takes control of the 49th Missile Defense Battalion

CAMP DENALI, Alaska—Lt. Col. Michael S. Hatfield assumed command of the 49th Missile Defense Battalion in a ceremony at Ft. Greely, Alaska, Sept. 11.

The mission of the 49th MDB is to protect the U.S. from the threat of intercontinental-ballistic-missile attacks from rogue nations with such capabilities, said Brig. Gen. Leon M. Bridges, assistant adjutant general of the Alaska Army National Guard.

"Lt. Col. Hatfield was the best of the applicants that applied," Bridges said. "He was selected by Guard Bureau, Space and Missile Defense Command, and a multi-state panel."

Hatfield began his career in the Army by enlisting as a Combat Medic in 1992. His first duty assignment was in the Army Reserves with the 2291st U.S. Army Hospital in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. From there, he served at the Noncommissioned Officer Academy at Ft. Indiantown Gap, PA, and finished his enlistment at the 914th Combat Support Hospital in Columbus, Ohio.

In 1996, Hatfield received his commission as a 2nd Lieutenant from the ROTC program at Ohio University. After graduating from the Air Defense Artillery (ADA) Officer Basic Course in 1997, Hatfield served as an Avenger/Stinger platoon leader and executive officer in Alpha Battery, 2-174th ADA Battalion in McConnellsville, Ohio.

During his time in the 2-174th ADA, Hatfield received many accolades for performance and was selected as the commander for the Headquarters and Headquarters Battery of the 2-174th ADA. During his command, the HHB increased to its highest level of readiness and was mobilized in 2003 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Later in 2003, Hatfield was selected for an Active Guard Reserve tour and was assigned to the 100th Missile Defense Brigade in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Hatfield served the next two years in the Missile Defense Element as a current operations officer and as a deputy director.

In 2006, Hatfield was selected as a director for the Fire Direction Center at Ft. Greely, Alaska. There, he served as the Alpha Crew Director and was selected to attend the Space Operations Officer Qualification Course. After completing the course, he assumed the responsibility of battalion executive officer from 2007 to 2009.

Hatfield returned to Colorado Springs and served as a Brigade Missile Defense Director from 2010 to 2013.

On the 12th anniversary of the September 11th attacks, Hatfield officially assumed responsibility of the 49th MDB as the battalion's commander.

"Getting a battalion command is always an amazing opportunity for any officer," said Bridges. "He's responsible for everything in the battalion, all the personnel management, the training and readiness of the people, the equipment, the reporting and the operational readiness to do that mission."

"Lt. Col. Hatfield has the right attitude, aptitude, and tactical and technical proficiency for the job," he added. "I consider him a fine officer and a fine gentleman, and I think he'll have a brilliant command tour."

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Cutlines:

Hildreth passes guidon to Hatfield

Col. Edward E. Hildreth III, commander of the 100th Missile Defense Brigade, Ground-based Midcourse Defense (GMD), Colorado Army National Guard, passes the unit guidon to Lt. Col. Michael S. Hatfield during a ceremony at Ft. Greely, Alaska, Sept. 11. The ceremony signified Hatfield's assumption of command of the 49th Missile Defense Battalion, GMD at Ft. Greely. Photo courtesy of Treva Slaughter